

METHODIK  
DER FORM- UND  
BILDGESTALTUNG

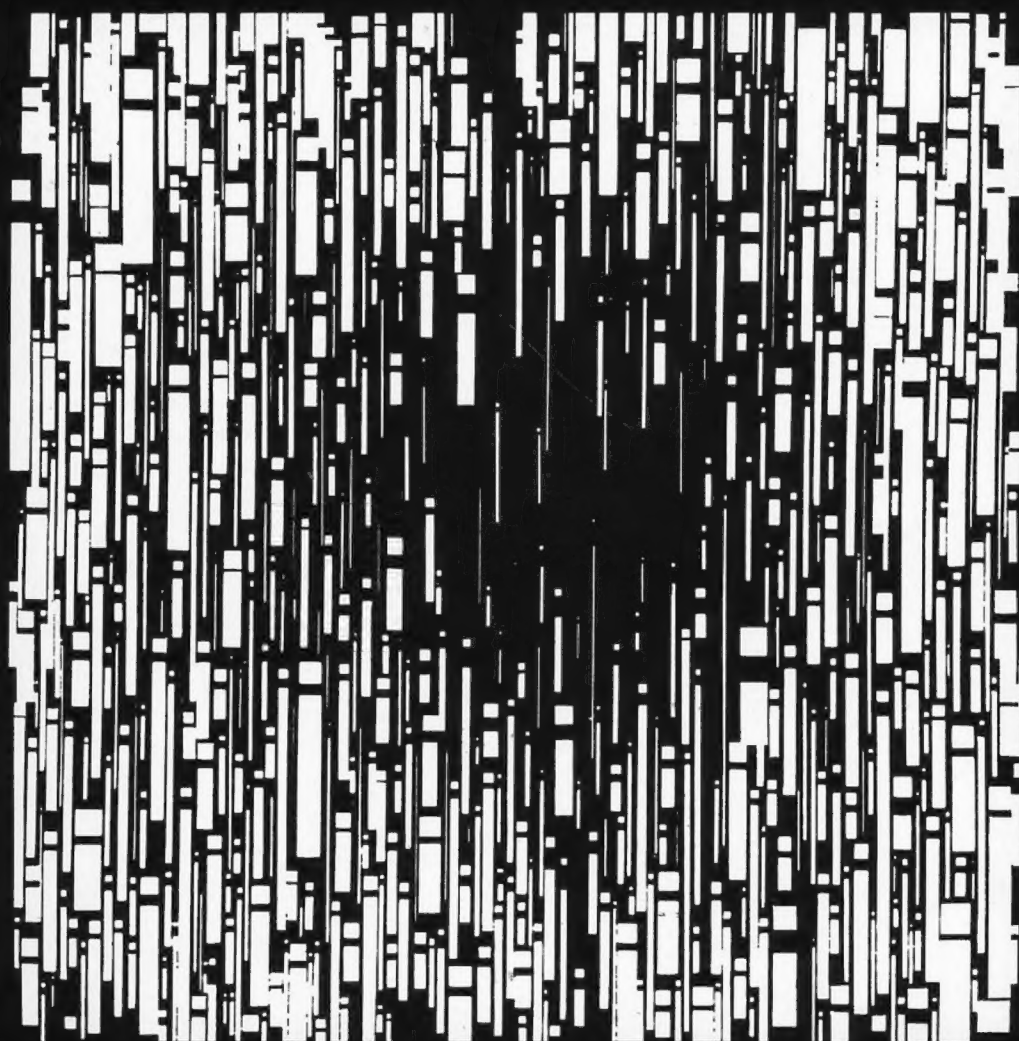
Aufbau  
Synthese  
Anwendung

MANUEL  
DE CRÉATION  
GRAPHIQUE

Forme  
Synthèse  
Application

GRAPHIC  
DESIGN  
MANUAL

Principles  
and  
Practice



Armin  
Hofmann

The idea of a dot must be understood in a very broad sense. All plane figures which have a center and are perceived as closed forms may be described as being dot-shaped. And even if a dot expands, it still remains a dot. A mere increase in the size of an element is not enough to alter its essential character. We must be able to recognize an element as such in spite of the accidentals of a particular embodiment. The dot may grow large and cover a flat area; in which case the question arises as to its precise external form, its color value and its surface texture. But when it is found in its smallest form, all these questions are superfluous.

Because it is circumscribed, balanced, non-figurative and weightless, the smallest dot is particularly well adapted to demonstrating the most important principles of composition. It is the most maneuverable element in the whole field of pictorial art – it is really a building block of instruction.

It is also rewarding from the technical point of view to look into the mobility of the dot. When any pictorial work is transferred to a printing surface, it is the dot alone that can make graded tone values, colors, transitions and blends reproducible. The whole technique of graphic reproduction is based on the small unit of the dot.

Exercises with dots – the most important graphic element – are particularly instructive when performed in the medium of lithography. Especially in our day when for the first time design is developing along separate lines from printing techniques, a great deal can be learned from the close artistic and technical relationship which is possible between the original and the reproduction in lithography.

If we place the smallest dot in the center of a square, its forces begin to make themselves felt at once. The two values dot-background must, however, always be proportioned to each other, otherwise too large a dot disrupts too small a background or too large a background overwhelms too small a dot.

In the safe middle ranges the dot readily establishes contact with its environment. The problem assumes a particular interesting form in marginal situations. At what moment does the dot emerge as such from its environment? Are there already relationships at this early stage of its appearance? It takes considerable artistic discernment to seek out and fix the extreme limits of a consonance between two elements. Throughout the region of marginal consonances there are great possibilities of producing tensions. The most marked tensions arise in the neighbourhood of disturbing forces, in the zone where there is a danger of one element being engulfed or overpowered by another.

Every dot, even the smallest, has radiating power; it is most at home in the center of its environment. But the dot-plane relationships invariably proceed exclusively outwards from the dot or inwards towards it. There is something unconditional and final about a dot in the center. In practical applications, it is true, the radiating power of the absolute center is of extreme importance, but a freer play of forces is needed to create more vital relationships. If the dot is displaced from the center, the static relationship between dot and background is unsettled. Above all, the somewhat passive plane of the background now becomes aggressive. It succeeds in startling the dot into flight, driving it round or forcing it to the outer limits. The illusion of space might even be evoked.

If we place another dot by the side of the first one, the dot-background relationship, which was previously the only contact, now becomes secondary. The two dots determine what happens on the plane. Their forces are reciprocally engaged along a linear path. When appropriately arranged, they can cut the plane into two parts and break out of the format. If we shorten the distance between the dots so that they impinge on each other, we have a pair of dots out of which the most varied new dot structures develop as the degree of fusion between them increases. In a triangle of dots this reciprocal action along the

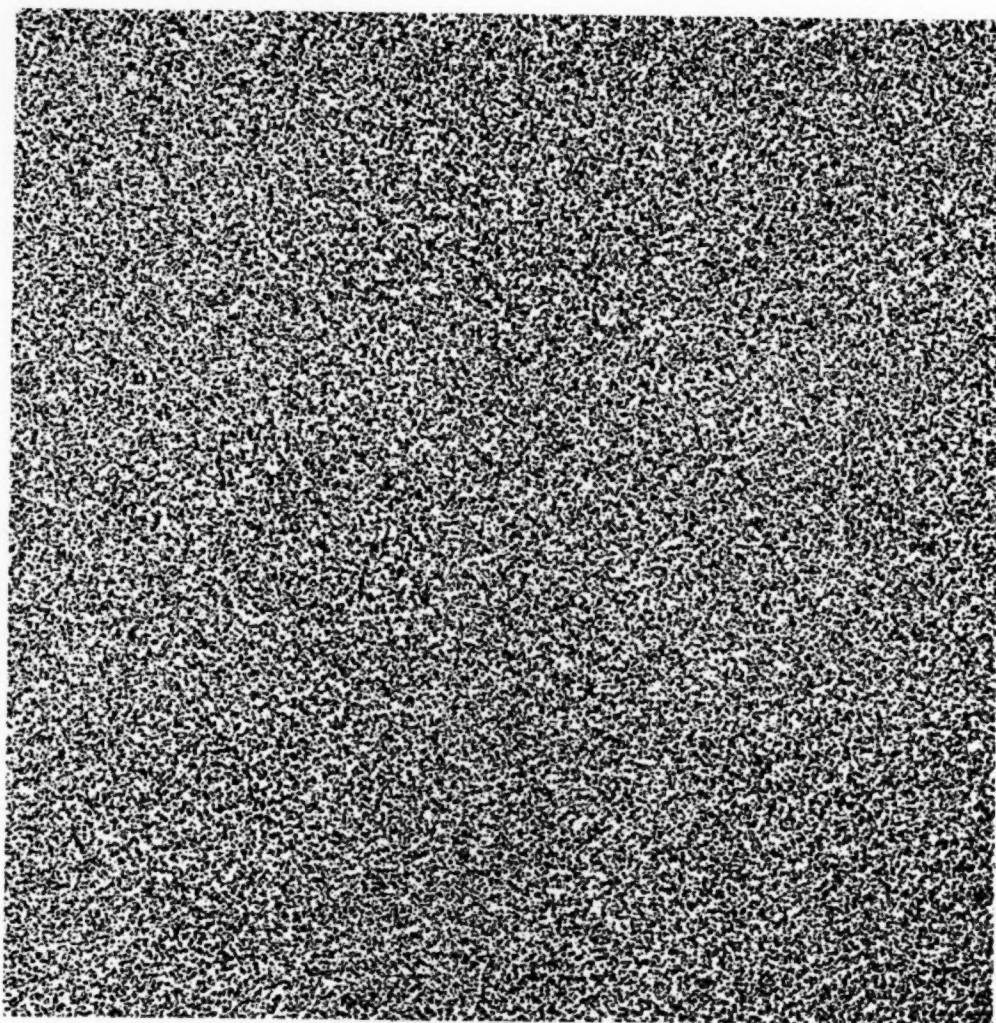


lines between the dots creates a stream of forces which is closed within itself; the movements remain within the format. Working with a large number of dots gives a rich variety of formulations: simple rows of dots, vertical and horizontal rows of dots (grid pattern), grouping, free and selective scattering, massing, variability in size, grey tone and color, and in texture.

Just as the expansion of the dot into a plane surface does not affect its nature, so the spatial expansion of the dot into a sphere leaves its essential character untouched. Through the addition of an extra dimension, the sphere simply gives added weight to the statement. The radiating power of the sphere is greater than that of the disc; through the addition of the new dimension, the pattern of forces has increased and the center must intensify its activity. Just as with the smallest dot, so in the case of the smallest sphere, for example, a speck of dust, the question of its characteristics does not arise, yet, hard though it is to visualize, these continue to exercise their effect.

In this book particular attention is paid to the combination of plane surfaces and three-dimensional elements. The reasons are twofold: first, to keep track of fundamental forces and, second, to enable us to make the transition from two-dimensional to three-dimensional designing in entirely concrete terms. We must endeavour to do away with artificially imposed limits which have now lost their validity.



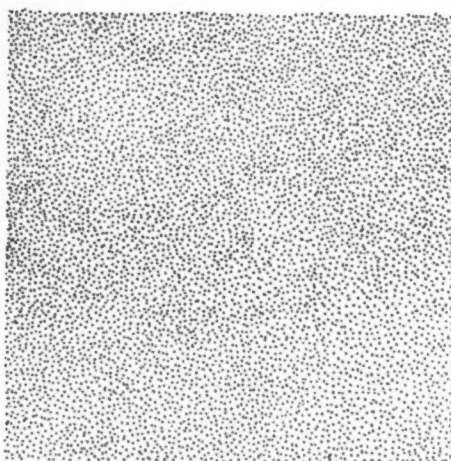


1

1  
Der Punkt entsteht, wenn Bleistift  
oder Kreide über eine stark gekörnte  
Oberfläche gleiten. (Lithographie)  
2  
Der Punkt entsteht durch kurzes  
Aufsetzen einer Tuschfeder auf einem  
glatten Untergrund.

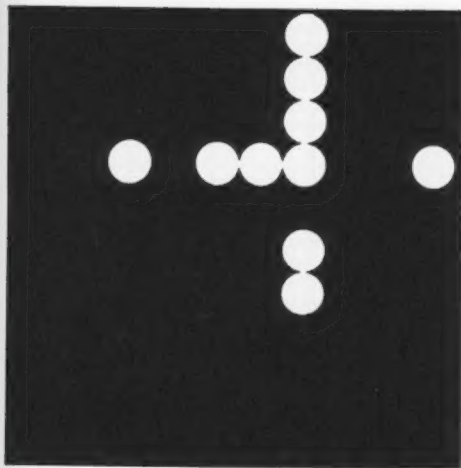
1  
Le point naît du frottement d'un  
crayon ou d'une craie sur une surface  
fortement granulée. (Lithographie)  
2  
Le point naît du bref contact d'un  
stylo à encre de Chine sur un fond  
uni.

1  
The dot is produced when a pencil  
or crayon is passed over a roughly  
grained surface. (Lithograph)  
2  
The dot is produced by briefly  
touching a smooth surface with pen  
and India ink.

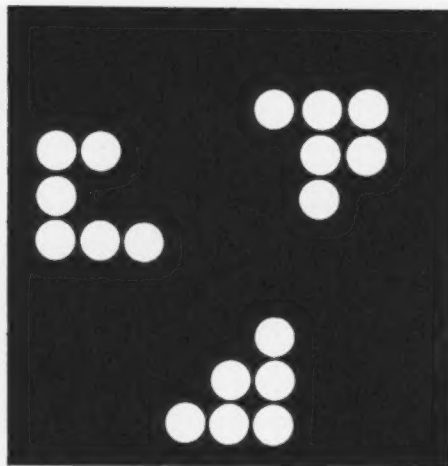


2

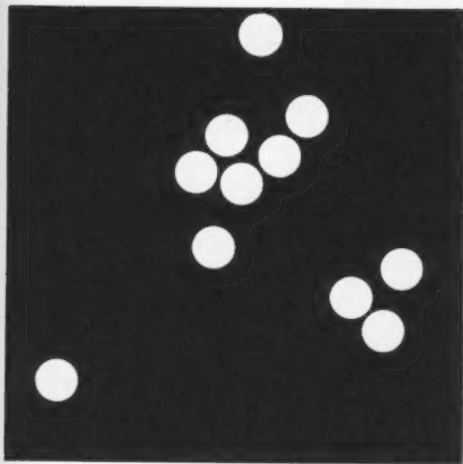




10



11



12

10  
Punktekruz aus einer Raster-  
einteilung herausgelöst  
11  
Drei Punktgruppen aus derselben  
Einteilung  
12  
Freie Streuung ohne Rasterbindung

10  
Croix formée de points ouverts  
dans les mailles d'une trame. (Le  
nom de trame est donné à la  
décomposition d'une surface en  
un certain nombre de parties égales.  
La trame la plus simple est ob-  
tenue en traçant des horizontales et  
des verticales ayant entre elles le  
même espacement.)

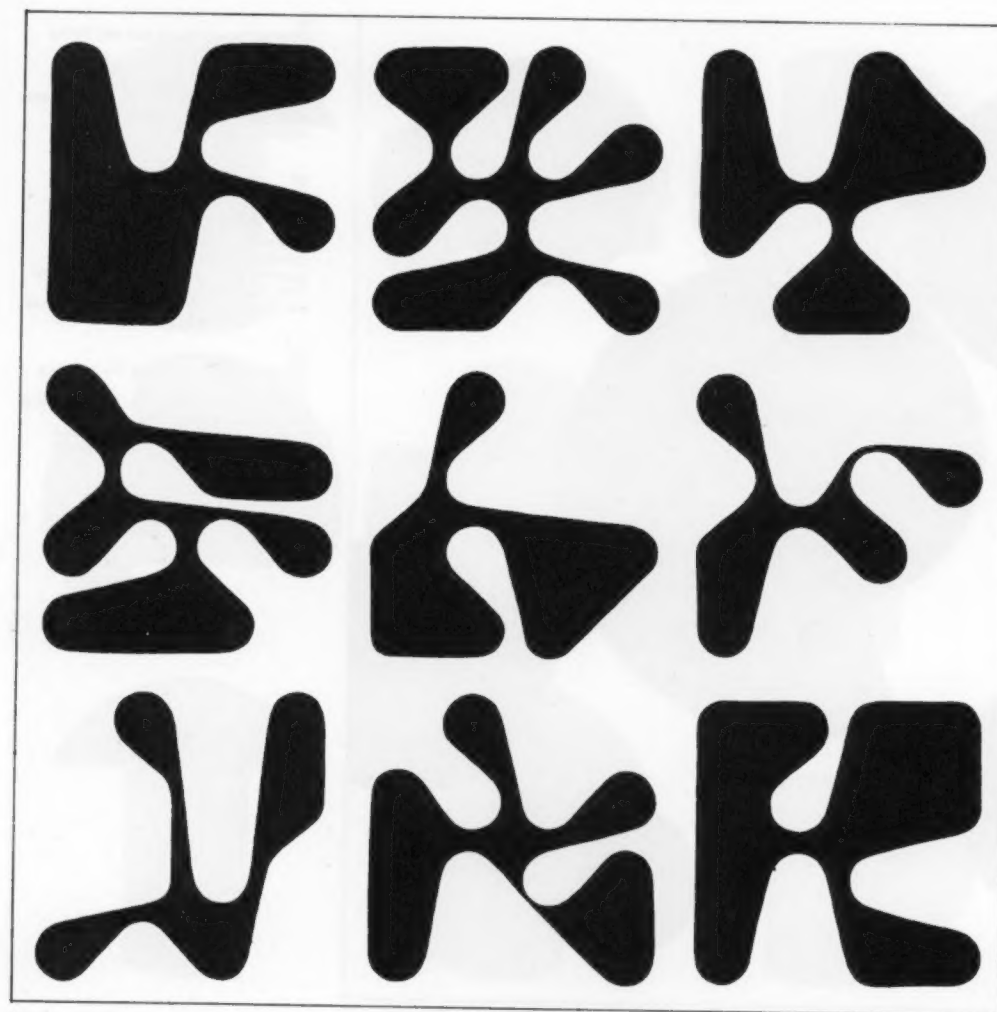
11  
Trois groupes de points provenant  
de la même trame

12  
Libre dispersion sans relation avec  
la trame

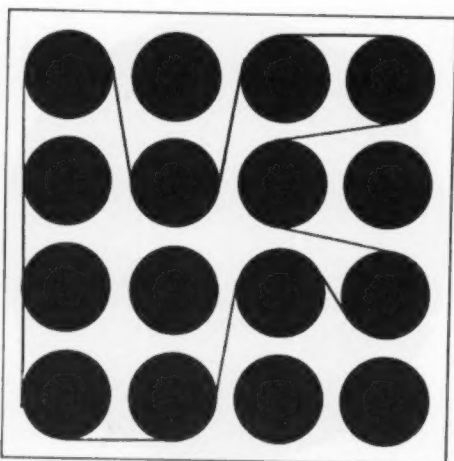
10  
Cross of dots separated out from  
the grid pattern

11  
Three groups of dots from the same  
pattern

12  
Free distribution without a grid  
pattern



51



52

51  
Variationsübung: wachsende, fließende Gebilde begegnen sich. Ausgangslage: 16 Punkte. Einzelne Punkte werden herausgelöst und untereinander verbunden. Die so entstandenen 9 Variationen werden wieder zu einer Einheit zusammengebaut.

52  
Ausgangslage für Nr. 51, Fig. 1

53  
Umsetzungsübung nach der Natur. Punktebildung auf einem Herbstblatt. (Litographie)

51  
Exercice de variations propre à exprimer des ensembles de forme fluide. Les 16 points d'une composition sont isolés et reliés différemment. Les 9 variations ainsi obtenues forment autant de compositions nouvelles.

52  
Situation de départ pour le numéro 51, fig. 1

53  
Exercice de transposition d'après nature. Formation de points sur une feuille d'automne. (Lithographie)

51  
Study in variations: growing, fluid structures meet one another. Starting position: sixteen dots. Certain dots are singled out and linked together. The nine variations thus created are recombined into a new unit.

52  
Starting position for No. 51, figure 1

53  
Transposition exercise from nature. Dot formation on an autumn leaf. (Lithograph)



57

57  
Herbstblatt-Übung. Bei stärkster  
Massierung von Punkten entstehen  
neue, kleinste, punktförmige  
Restformen. (Lithographie)

58  
Büchse für ein Pflanzenschutzmittel.  
Verfolgten wir bei Nr. 43 und Nr. 44  
Abwicklungen von Punkte-  
gruppierungen auf kubischen Körpern,  
ist hier der Zylinder als  
Übungskörper gewählt.

57  
Exercice sur une feuille morte. Du  
fait de la forte concentration de  
points naissent des formes  
résiduelles nouvelles extrêmement  
petites, réduites elles-mêmes à des  
points. (Lithographie)

58  
Boîte contenant un produit pour  
protéger les plantes. Alors qu'aux  
numéros 43 et 44 le développement  
des groupements de points se faisait  
sur un solide parallélépipédique, il  
s'agit ici d'un cylindre.

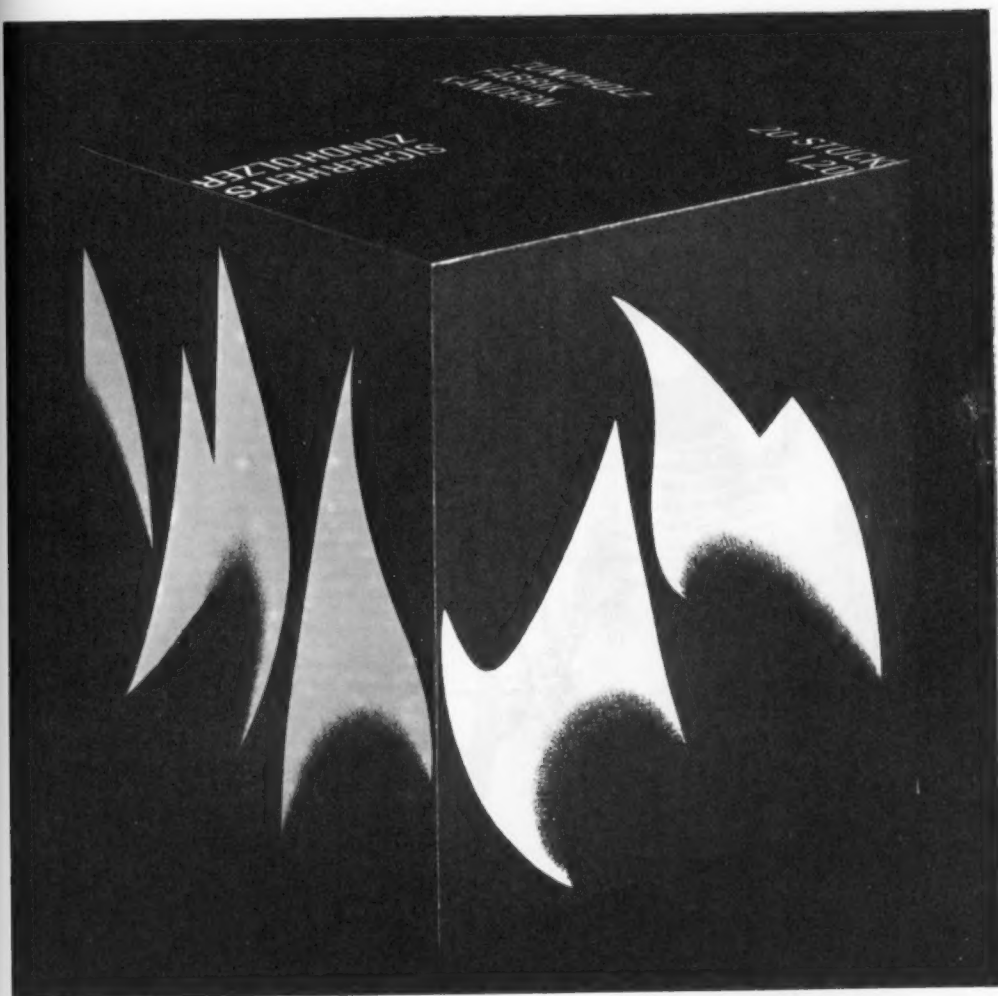
57  
Autumn leaf study. The dots are  
intensely massed together and  
leave over new and minute dot-  
shaped forms. (Lithograph)

58  
Container for a plant insecticide.  
Whereas in No. 43 and 44 we saw  
how groups of dots were disposed  
over cubes, here the solid chosen  
is the cylinder.









63

62  
Ausschnitt aus einem Schmetterlings-  
flügel. Der Punkt gerät in Fahrt.  
(5-farbige Kreide-Lithographie)

63  
Entwurf für eine Kerzenpackung.  
Ähnliche Situation wie bei Nr. 62.  
Punkteffluat beim Aufkommen von  
Kerzen. (Verbindung Kreidestruktur/  
Fläche/Schrift, auf Offsetplatte  
gezeichnet)

64  
Punkteffluat durch Druckbewegungen  
mit einer Kreide (Lithographie)

62  
Fragment d'une aile de papillon. Le  
point s'élance. (Dessin à la craie en  
5 couleurs - lithographie)

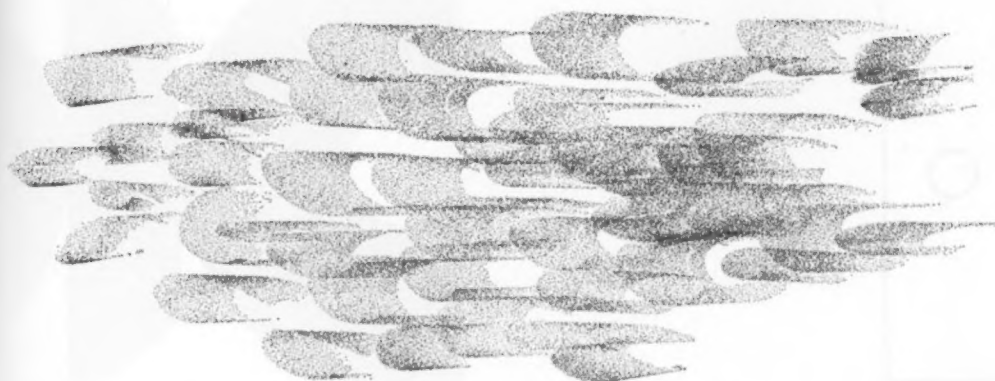
63  
Projet pour emballage de bougies.  
Même situation qu'au numéro 62.  
Mouvement de fuite des points pour  
dessiner la flamme des bougies.  
(Association: structure de la craie/  
surface/caractères - dessiné  
sur plaque offset)

64  
Mouvement de fuite des points  
provoqué par les déplacements de  
la craie (Lithographie)

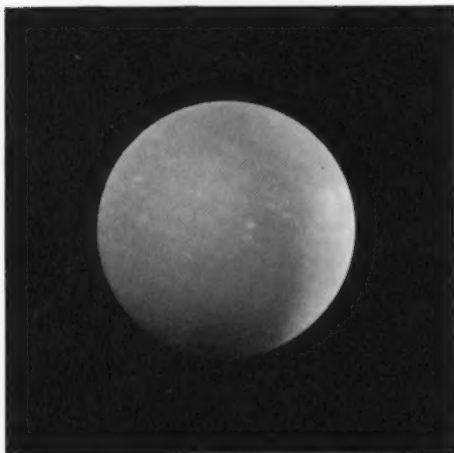
62  
Part of a butterfly's wing. The  
dot is set in motion. (5-color chalk  
lithograph)

63  
Design for a candle box. Situation  
similar to No. 62. The dots take  
flight as the candles flare up.  
(Combination of crayon texture,  
surface and lettering, drawn on  
offset plate)

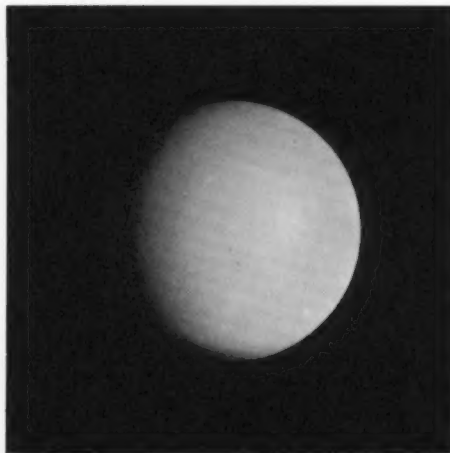
64  
Streaming motion of dots, produced  
by a crayon moved under pressure  
(Lithograph)



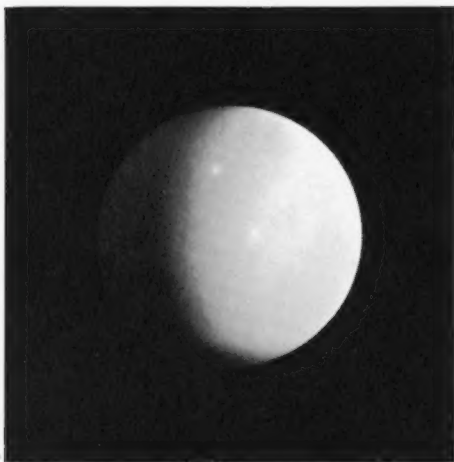
64



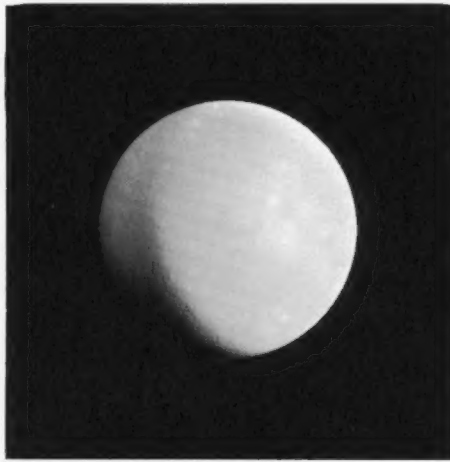
83



84



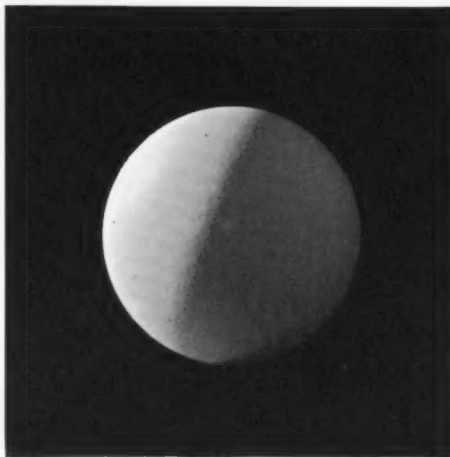
85



86



87



88

83 84 85 86 87 88  
Die Kugel als Raumpunkt  
(Verschiedene Lichteinfälle)

83 84 85 86 87 88  
La sphère, point dans l'espace, sous  
différents éclairages

83 84 85 86 87 88  
The sphere as a space-occupying dot  
(Various forms of lighting)



In our exercises with dots the line figured repeatedly in the important role of a connecting link. In one case this connection between two distant dots is invisible – it is simply imagined; in another case where dots follow very closely upon one another in a linear arrangement, it already appears as an independent force. If one runs a pencil over a paper, a line appears which is made up of dots so small that they can no longer be recognized as such. Only by using suitable instruments, particularly the brush and drawing pen, can a compact line be produced with a fluid medium. But even in this case it should be remembered that the line is the visible trace of a moving dot. Hence the line is dependent on the dot; it presupposes the dot as its own basic element.

Movement is the real domain of the line. Unlike the dot, which is bound to a center and is therefore static, the line is dynamic by nature. It can be continued indefinitely in either direction, it is bound neither to a form nor to a center. If the line is nevertheless conceived as a basic element, this is only because the process that created it is no longer perceptible as such. The line is an element that has already gone through a process of growth.

If the dot is an important element in structure and analysis, the line performs the important duty of construction. It joins, articulates, bears, supports, holds together and protects; lines intersect and ramify.

The simplest configuration of lines is the grid of vertical or horizontal lines. If a thin line is repeated at constant intervals it produces a solid grey effect in which the single line is no longer discernible, analogous to the way in which the individual dot merges its separate existence into that of a uniform mass of dots.

If we remove individual lines from the grid, new ones instantly appear – but on a different plane. This makes us realize that two qualities of essentially equal value are operative in the grid: namely

the black line and the white line, which are at all times interdependent. Two straight parallel lines produce a third enclosed between them. The relationship of negative-positive, one of the most important encounters between opposites in all design work, arises automatically. The space in-between, which is a by-product, is just as important as the element producing it.

Progressively increasing the distance between the lines, slowly thickening the line itself, taking away from above or below, slanting the line within the field of operations – all these are processes which, because of their very simplicity, recall fundamental but forgotten knowledge to our minds.

Like the dot, the line does not change its nature, however extended it becomes. But unlike the dot, which, however much enlarged, still appears to the eye as a dot, the line, when extended, rapidly passes from the field of vision. If the line is thickened too much in proportion to its length, the eye sees it as a plane surface. The line as such can only be mentally grasped in terms of the relationship between its length and width. It is more easily affected by distance than the dot.

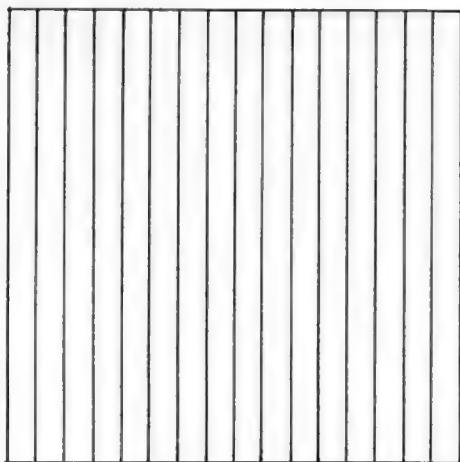
The thin line, like the small dot, is not a suitable vehicle for color. Even if infinitely prolonged, it is difficult for it to give tone and color values any scope for display. If its thickness is increased enough for color to have an adequate field of action, then, to remain a line, its length must be extended beyond visual range. The black line loses its intensity and turns grey as it gets thinner. The white line holds out longest against a black background. It gains additional luminosity as it grows thinner.

In the field of reproduction the woodcut, the linocut and the etching are particularly suitable for linear designs because in these original techniques both the material and the instruments lend themselves ideally to the production of line. In the woodcut and the linocut the line cut in the material appears negative (white on

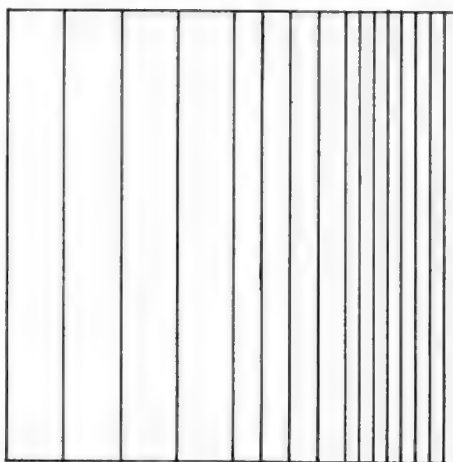
black) in the print. For a black line on a white ground a more complicated process is necessary. The etching genuinely produces a positive black line on a white ground, although, to the superficial observer, the actual operation, the formation of the line, seems basically the same as that in the woodcut and the linocut. The etching is better suited than almost any other medium for making lines of extreme delicacy. The ungrained smooth lithographic stone, the offset plate and, more recently, the film, offer the least resistance to the production of line. Linear designs can be easily drawn with a pen or brush. The material itself sets no limits to refinements in the thickness of the stroke or to the rapidity with which the strokes can be executed.

All these methods of reproduction have been rendered obsolete by the latest technical developments. All the same, they do afford the student today a practical opportunity of coming to grips with basic methods within the field of reproduction where processes are growing constantly more complicated. In these primary printing techniques trimmings and frills must be dispensed with. The purest expression of line, the manifestation of its essence so to say, is invariably attained with the most success when – like every other pictorial element – it is conceived with its reproduction by a printing technique in mind.

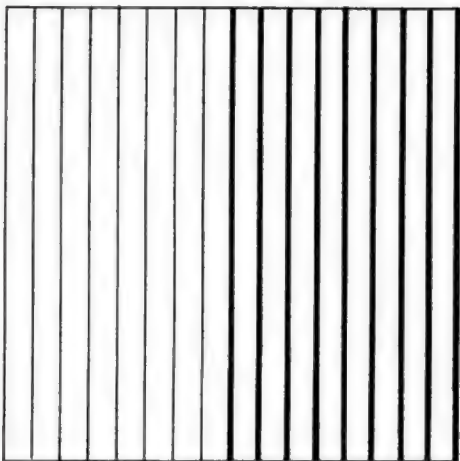




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117

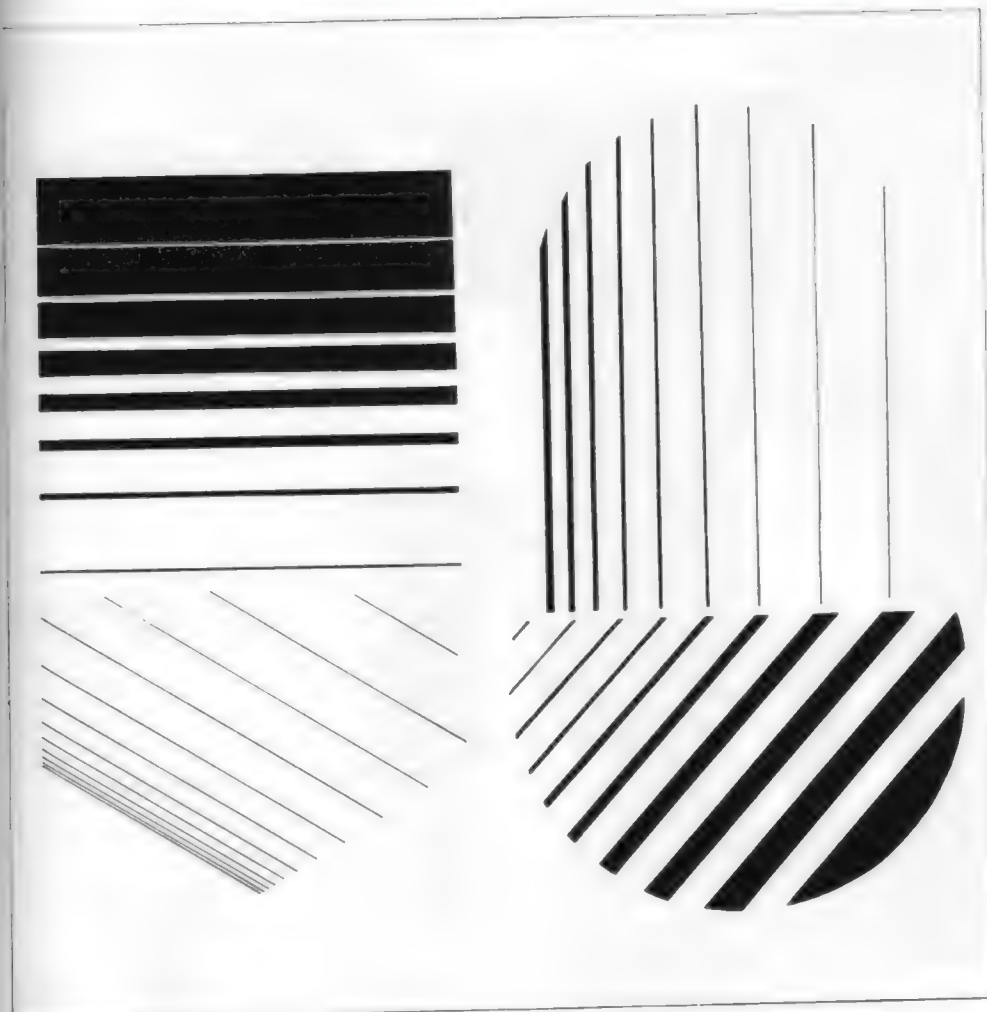


118

116  
Gleichmäßige Wiederholung der  
senkrechten Linie  
117  
Wiederholung der senkrechten Linie  
mit dreimaliger Verengung der  
Abstände  
118  
Wiederholung von dünnen und von  
fetten Linien mit gleichbleibenden  
Abständen

116  
Répétition régulière de la ligne  
verticale  
117  
Répétition des lignes verticales avec  
trois resserments différents des  
espacements  
118  
Répétition équidistante de lignes  
minces et de lignes épaisses

116  
Uniform repetition of a vertical line  
117  
Repetition of a vertical line in which  
the distance between the lines is  
reduced three times  
118  
Repetition of thin and thick lines  
at regular intervals



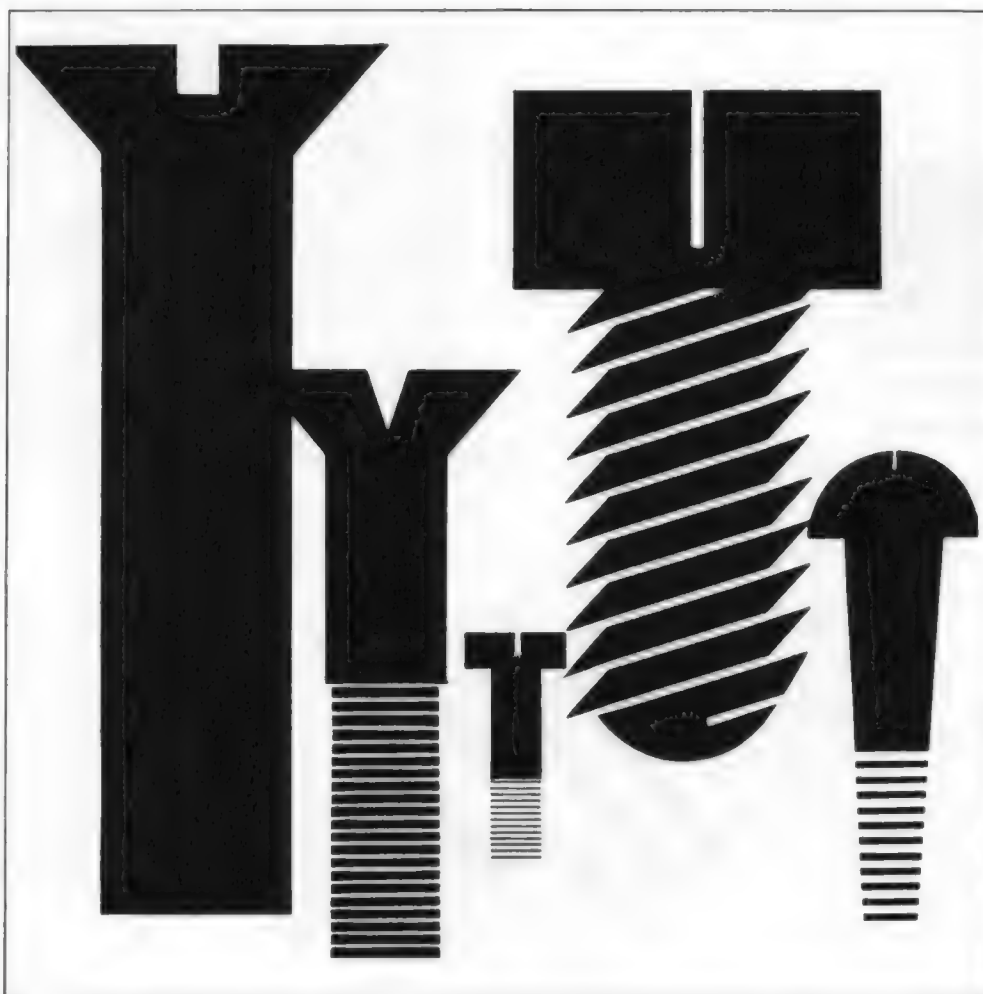
127

127  
Jaßkarten-Figuren. Besonders  
eindrücklich ist hier das wechselnde  
Spiel um den Vorrang der schwarzen  
oder weißen Streifen. Trotz der  
großen Bewegung, die das Linien-  
spiel verursacht, bleibt es doch vor  
allem Tonwertersatz.

127  
Figures de cartes à jouer.  
Le jeu d'alternance entre la priorité  
visuelle accordée aux bandes noires  
ou aux bandes blanches est parti-  
culièrement impressionnant. Malgré  
le grand mouvement que cause le  
jeu de lignes, celui-ci reste  
cependant avant tout un substitut de  
valeurs tonales.

127  
Playing card figures. A particularly  
impressive feature here is the  
interplay between the primacy of  
the black or white lines. In spite of  
the lively sense of motion which the  
play of lines imparts, it remains  
primarily a substitute for tone value.



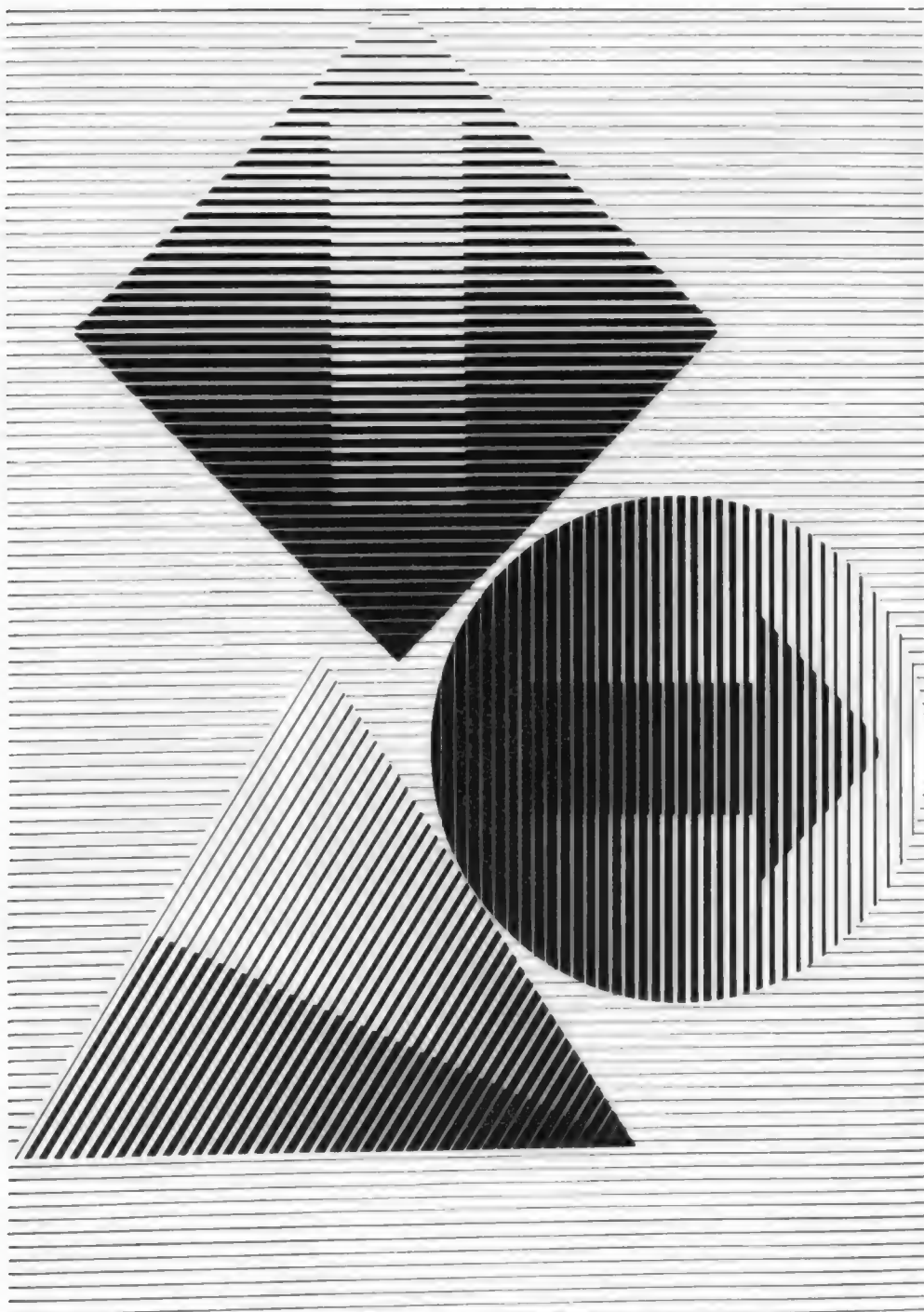


128

128  
Ein weiteres Beispiel für abgestufte  
Grauwerte, hervorgerufen durch  
verschiedene Linienqualitäten  
(Linolschnitt)

128  
Autre exemple de gris nuancés par  
des épaisseurs différentes de lignes  
(Gravure sur linoléum)

128  
Another example of graded tones of  
grey produced by different qualities  
of lines (Linocut)



133  
 Vorstufe zu einem Verkehrsplakat.  
 Die Anwendung der progressiv  
 gestuften Linie erzeugt den Eindruck  
 von Bewegung und Geschwindigkeit.  
 Der gleichmäßig durchgezogene  
 waagrechte Linienraster des  
 Hintergrundes ist Träger der  
 Gesamtbewegung.

133  
 Maquette d'affiche pour la circulation.  
 L'utilisation de la ligne progressive-  
 ment épaissie engendre l'impression  
 de mouvement et de vitesse. La  
 trame de l'arrière-plan formée de  
 lignes horizontales équidistantes, est  
 le support du mouvement global.

133  
 First stage of a traffic poster. The  
 use of a progressively graded line  
 evokes the impression of movement  
 and speed. The regular pattern of  
 horizontal lines provides the back-  
 ground against which the general  
 movement takes place.





SB&S herumschnell wochenabonnements zu günstigen Preisen

134  
Eisenbahnplakat. Differenziertere  
Anwendung der aus den vorange-  
gangenen Übungen gewonnenen  
Erkenntnisse. (Strichzeichnung)

134  
Affiche pour chemins de fer.  
Utilisation plus différenciée des  
connaissances acquises dans les  
exercices précédents. (Dessin au  
trait)

134  
Railway poster. What has been learnt  
in the preceding exercises has been  
applied here in more elaborate forms.  
(Line drawing)



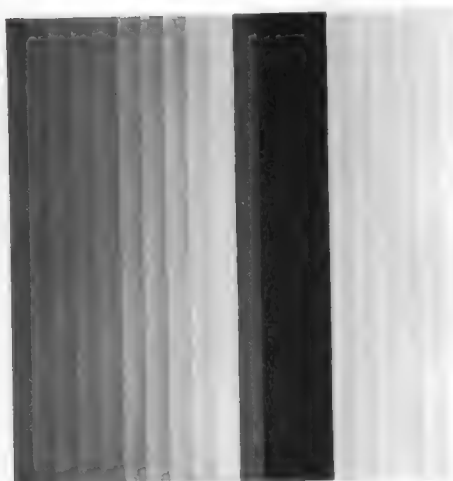
135



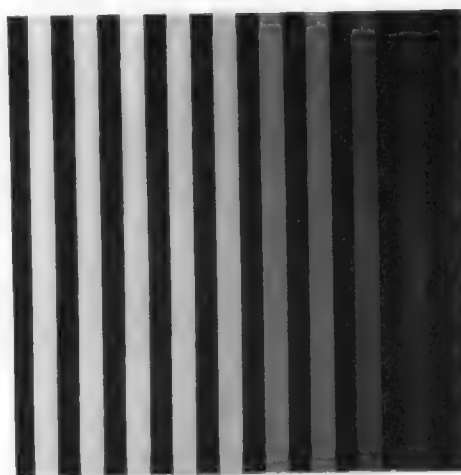
135 136 137  
Die Illusion von Bewegungsabläufen, die bis jetzt durch eine Stufung von Liniendicke und Abständen geschaffen werden mußte, kann auch erzeugt werden durch die Verwendung von verschiedenen Tonwerten.

135 136 137  
L'illusion du mouvement qui jusqu'ici devait être créée par la variation de l'épaisseur des lignes et leur distancement peut aussi être obtenue par l'emploi de différentes valeurs de tons.

135 136 137  
The illusion of movement previously evoked by a gradation of line thicknesses and interspaces can also be produced by using different tone values.



136



137



Mustermesse  
Halle 9  
27. Aug. - 15. Sept.  
14.17 Uhr  
Taglich geöffnet  
Sonntags  
geöffnet  
Einfahrt

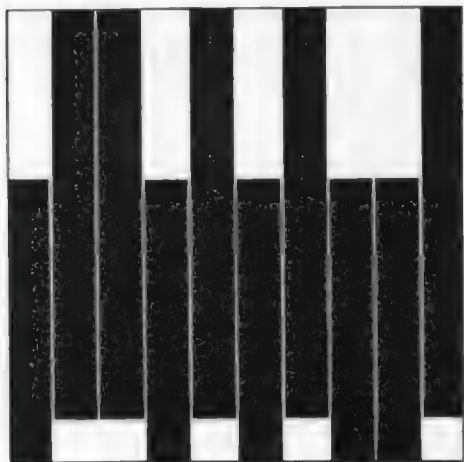
139  
Kinderverkehrsgarten-Plakat.  
Eindringen eines Pfeiles in die  
Tonwertstufung.

139  
Affiche destinée à un circuit de  
circulation pour enfants. Insertion  
d'une flèche dans les valeurs de  
tons.

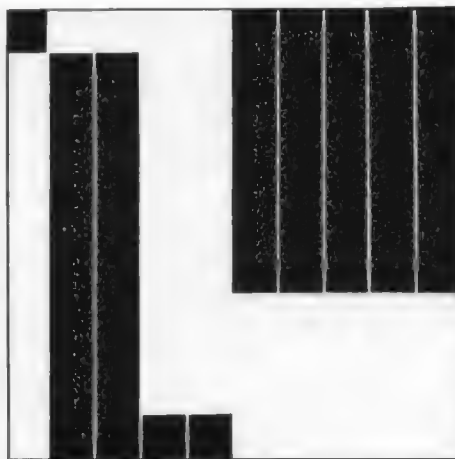
139  
Poster for a children's traffic school.  
An arrow penetrates into the scale  
of tone values.



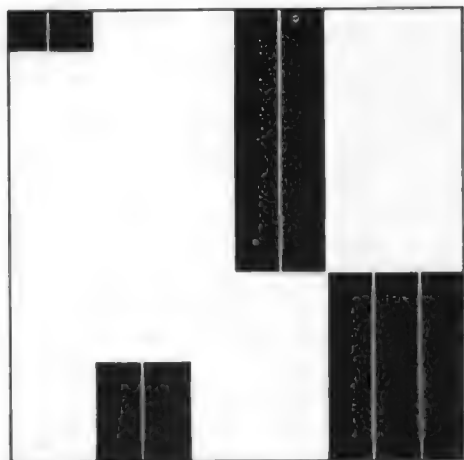
139



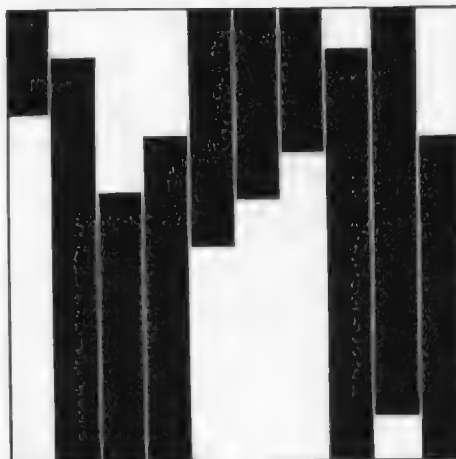
144



145



146



147

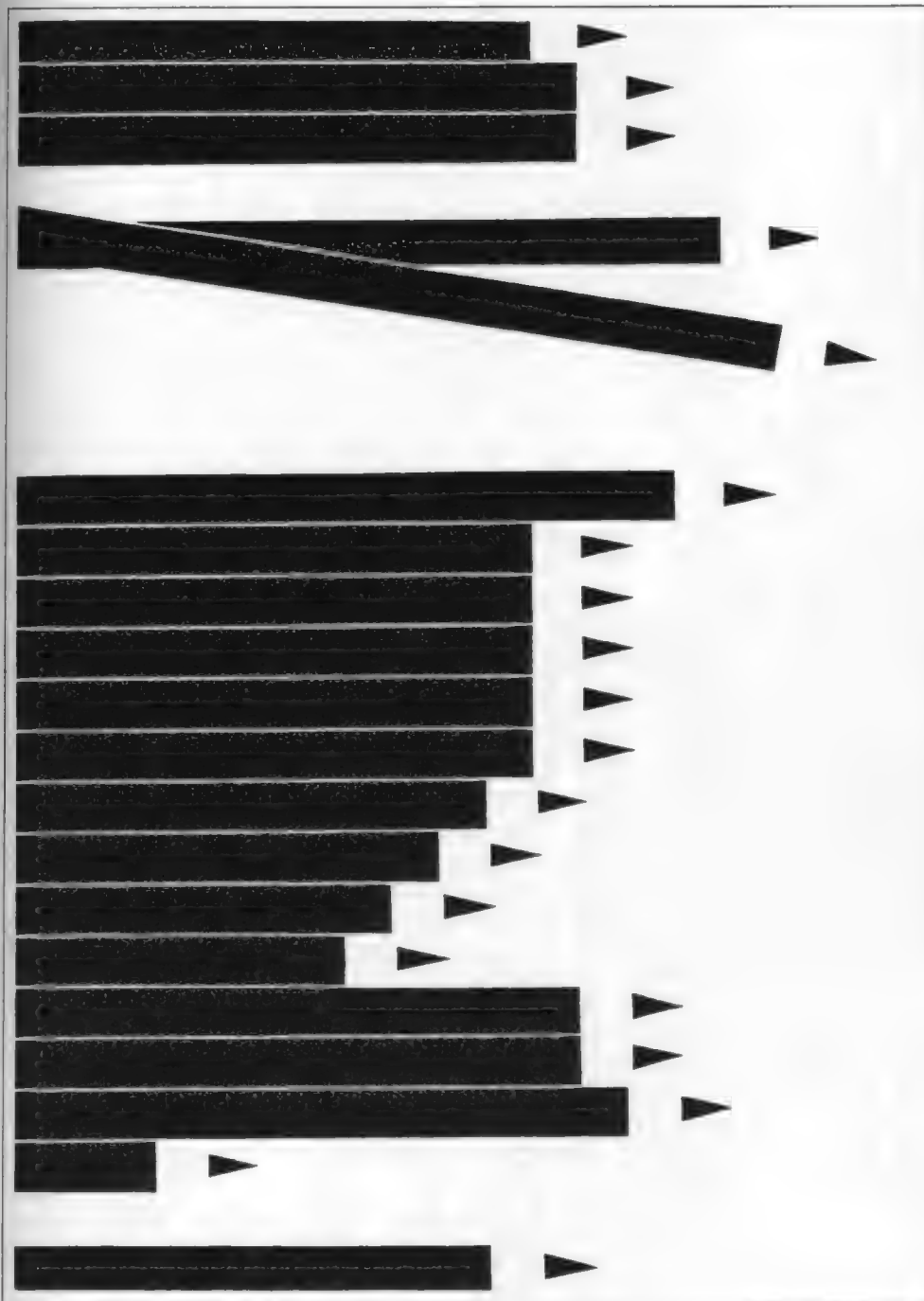


148

144 145 146 147  
Aus dem senkrechten schwarzen Balkenraster werden einzelne Teile weggenommen. Dadurch entstehen gleichwertige schwarze und weiße Figuren. Themen: in der Mitte gehalten; große Gegensätze; verschiedene Gruppen; auf und ab.  
148  
Signet: Geigenkopf (siehe auch Nr. 301)

144 145 146 147  
Différentes parties sont retirées des bandes verticales noires qui forment la trame. Il en résulte des figures noires et des figures blanches qui sont également significatives. On peut ainsi exprimer les grands contrastes, les différents groupes, le mouvement de va-et-vient (haut-bas), le fait d'être tenu par le milieu, etc.  
148  
Symbole: crosse de violon (voir le numéro 301)

144 145 146 147  
Certain parts are blanked out from the lattice grid of bars. This gives rise to both black and white figures of equal quality. Themes: steady in the middle; marked contrasts; various groups; up and down.  
148  
Symbol: head of violin (see No. 301)



149  
Entwurf zu einem Plakat für  
Bleistiftfabrik

149  
Projet d'affiche pour une fabrique  
de crayons

149  
Design for a poster for a pencil  
factory





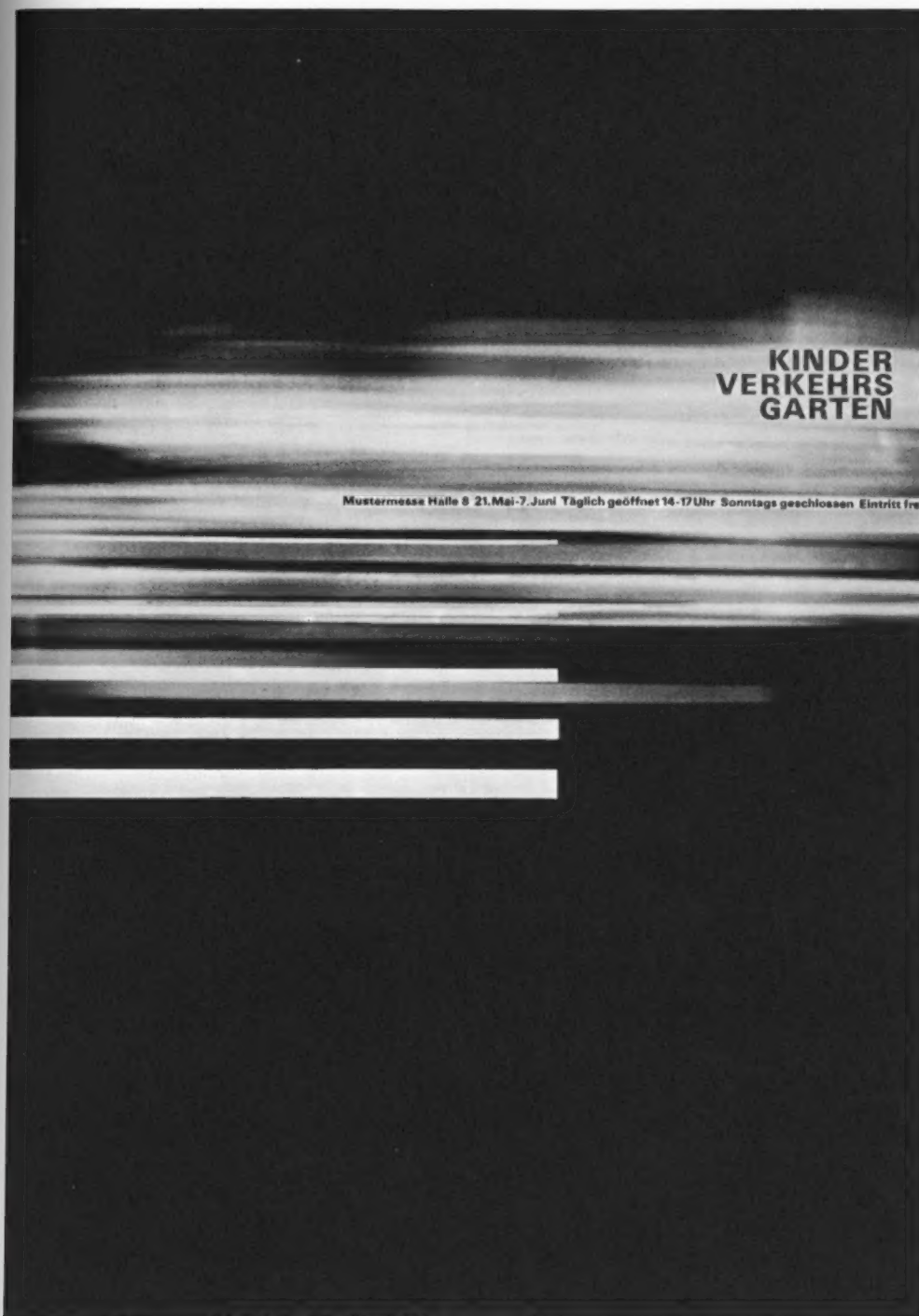
## Fachklasse für Graphik

Basel Gewerbemuseum  
Ausstellung 31. August - 6. Oktober  
täglich geöffnet  
10-12 und 14-18 Uhr  
Mittwoch auch 20-22 Uhr  
abendliche Führungen  
Eintritt frei

153  
Plakat für Grafikausstellung

153  
Affiche pour une exposition  
graphique

153  
Poster for an exhibition of graphic  
design



155  
 Kinderverkehrsgarten-Plakat.  
 Gegenüberstellung von fließendem  
 Verkehr und ruhigem Überqueren  
 der Fahrbahn auf dem Fußgänger-  
 streifen. (Photo/Zeichnung)

155  
 Affiche destinée à un circuit de  
 circulation pour enfants.  
 Opposition entre le trafic continu  
 et la traversée tranquille de la  
 chaussée sur les passages réservés  
 aux piétons. (Photo et dessin)

155  
 Poster for children's traffic school.  
 The rush of traffic is contrasted with  
 the quietness of the pedestrian  
 crosswalk. (Photo and drawing)

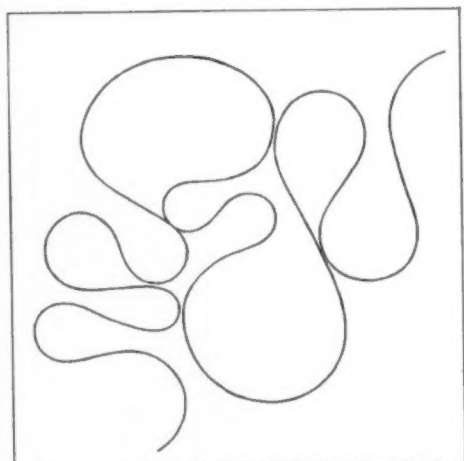


207

207  
Spontane heftige Bewegung mit der  
Kreide (Lithographie)  
208  
Langsame Abwicklung einer  
bewegten Linie mit dünner Feder

207  
Mouvement vigoureux et spontané  
avec de la craie (Lithographie)  
208  
Lent déroulement d'une ligne ondulée  
fait à la plume fine

207  
Vigorous spontaneous movements  
with crayon (Lithograph)  
208  
Slow development of a winding line  
with a fine pen



208



der

ulée

ne

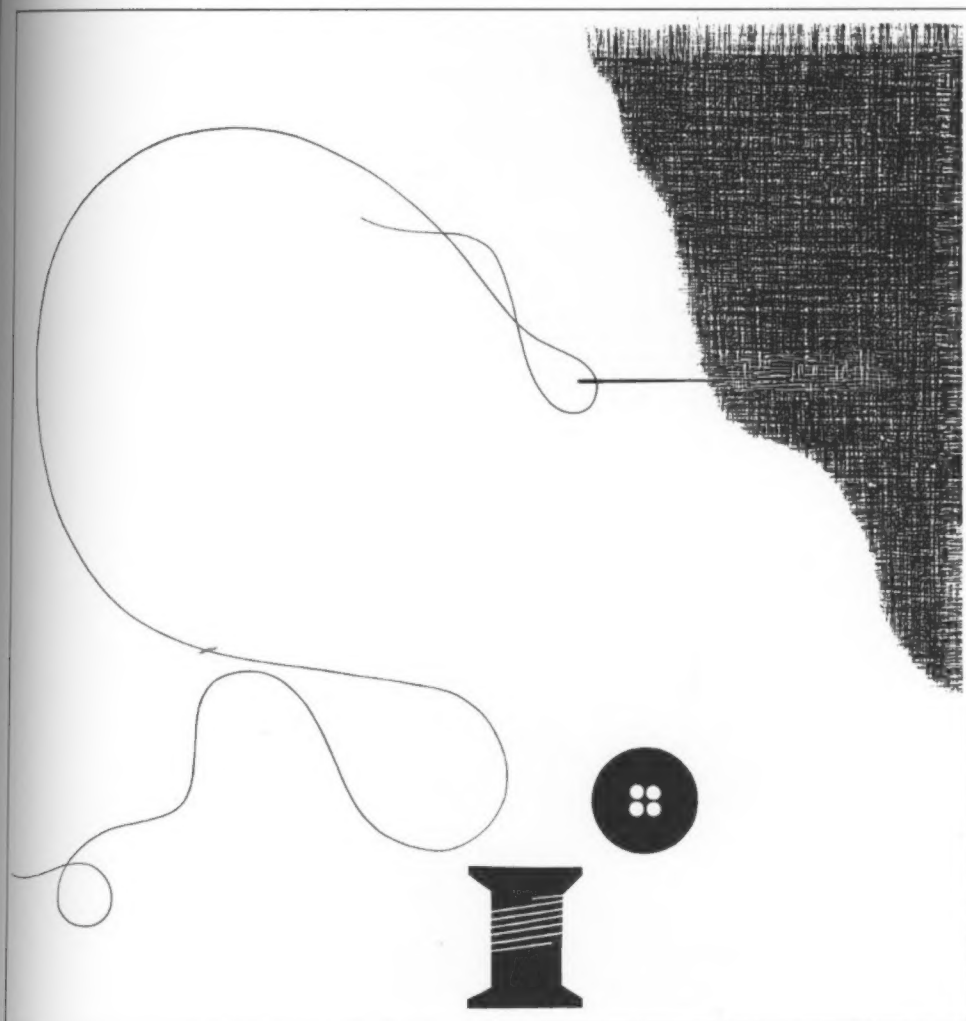


209

209  
Inserat für Elektrizitätswerk

209  
Annonce pour une fabrique de  
matériel électrique

209  
Advertisement for an electrical  
power company



212

212  
Kompositionsübung, gegenständlich

212  
Exercice de composition représentant des objets

212  
Composition study, figurative